A

Funeral Sermon

FOR

That FAITHFUL

AND

LABORIOUS

Servant of CHRIST,

Mr Richard Fairclough,

(Who Deceased *July* 4. 1682. in the Sixty first year of his Age.)

BY

JOHN HOWE

Minister of the Gospel.

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To the Reverend

Mr. SAMUEL FAIRCLOUGH,
Mr. JOHN FAIRCLOUGH,
Mr. GEORGE JONES,
Mr. RICHARD SHUTE,
With their Pious Conſorts;

The Brethren *and* Siſters *of the Deceaſed Mr.* RICHARD FAIRCLOUGH.

My worthy Friends,

IT *is, I apprehend, a* grievous *thing to you, to be deſtitute of the* wonted ſolace, *you have taken in thoſe your moſt delectable* Relatives, *the* Father, *and the* elder

der Brother *of a* Family, *whereof you were the* genuine, *or the* ingrafted Branches. *Whether* Nature *or* Choice *gave you your Intereſt, you had a* common *concern, and Comfort in it. And indeed, from a* Love *too little common to the reſt of the World.* The Love *that hath ſo obſervably flouriſhed among you, and been your* Collective, Unitive Bond, *as it hath ſhewn it ſelf to be of an* higher, *than the* Common, kind; demonſtrated *its own* Divine Original, *and that it had its* root in Heaven; *ſo have its effects* been a Demonſtration, *what* ſuch a Love *can do, for the Cheriſhing of* Union, *not only in a* private Family, *but in the* Church, and Family of the Living God *alſo. And how little neceſſary it is unto an* Union, even there,

there, *that there be a ſameneſs of ſentiments, and Practices in* every little punctilio; *for a diſagreement wherein, too many have thought themſelves licenſed to hate, and even deſtroy one another. As* God himſelf *was the* Fountain, *ſo he was the* firſt object *of* that Love *with you. And as* your Love to him *cauſed your entire devotedneſs to his Intereſt, ſo* your mutual Love *united your Hearts* (*according to your ſeveral Capacities*) *in ſerving it; without* grudging, *or* hard thoughts, *that each one ſerv'd it not* exactly in the ſame way. *By* that Love *you have been undivided in your* Joyes, *and* Sorrows *in reference to one another. While your very eminent* Father *Survived, how* gladly *did you pay a* joint Reverence

and Duty *to him! what a glory was his* hoary Head *unto you!* This your worthy Brother *was the next reſort and center of your* united *reſpect, and delight. I doubt not you feel your* loſs *as to both; which (thô God had made a former breach upon you) the* longer continuance, *as well as the pleaſantneſs of the* enjoyment, *cannot but have made* the more ſenſible *unto you. We are ſomewhat apt to Plead* a Preſcription *for our* more continued *Comforts. But you know how little* that *avails againſt a* Statute, *as that (for inſtance) by which* it is appointed that all muſt dye: *Nor is it to be regretted that the abſolute* Lord of all, *ſhould pluck in pieces our* earthly Families, *for the Building and Compleating*

ing his own in Heaven.

What I have ſaid of this your excellent Brother, *in the cloſe of the following Diſcourſe, is but* a ſmall part of what you know. *The ſaying it ſerves for the* Solace of the Survivors, not the advantage of the Dead †. *And the Solace is real, and great, when* imitation *makes all that is commendable,* our own *and* moſt intimate to our ſelves. *It is, otherwiſe but a* faint Comfort *to have been Related to an excellent Perſon! When a Limb is cut off, the Soul retires to the remaining parts. May a* double Portion *of the* Spirit *and* Life, *which were ſo copious and vigorous in the Deceaſed, abound unto you! And*

† Auguſt. de cur. pro mort. gerend.

I ſhould be very faulty, if I put not in for ſome ſhare with you, who muſt profeſs my ſelf a great ſharer in your Affliction and Loſs; and

Your very Affectionate

Brother, and Servant

in our Lord,

John Howe.

A Funeral SERMON:

MAT. XXV. 21.

His Lord ſaid unto him, Well done good and faithful Servant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things: enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.

IT may ſeem ſomewhat Incongruous, and an indecency that this *Memorial* of our *worthy Friend*, ſhould be now Solemniz'd ſo long after *his very remains* are gone from off the face of the Earth. But two things concurr'd to make the delay neceſſary, and unavoidable, *viz.* That his own

deſire, expreſt in his *Will*, limited the Performance of this Office to the Perſon upon whom it now falls. And that my own great Infirmities, before the time of his Sickneſs and Death, (which made it more likely he ſhould have done this part for me, than I for him) had obliged me to begin a courſe, for the repairing of languiſhing Health, which required ſome Weeks attendance abroad, and which could not be ſooner over.

But, if our buſineſs were only to Mourn, and lament our own, and the more common Loſs, it were not yet too late. The mention of his Name, *The worthy Mr. Richard Fairclough* is enough to Open freſh Springs, calling to remembrance ſuch a *Brother*, ſuch a *Friend*, ſuch a *Preacher of the Word of Life* as he was.

And it ſhould do it moſt of all upon the moſt common account: whom would it not induce to Mourn over this forlorn World, to ſee that every thing that is more excellent, more pure, more deſirable, more capable of being uſeful

uſeful in it, God is gathering up out of it? O how much of Spirit and Life is gone from it, when one ſuch man dies? how are we to mourn over the World as dying, gradually, the worſt ſort of Death, when the *Holy, Divine life* is thus exhal'd out of it, and is expiring by degrees?

But come, we have ſomewhat elſe to do than Mourn; all this tends to make a glorious Heaven, one bright Star the more is now added to it; there is nothing of this holy Life loſt; whatſoever of Excellency, Purity, Goodneſs, Life, Lovelineſs, and Love *of that Divine kind* vaniſhes from among us, is but transferr'd to its own native place, returns to its proper Element, as the forſaken Duſt hath to its own. Heaven hath its part out of every ſuch Perſon, the ſeat of all Life, Purity, and Goodneſs; as the Earth draws into its Boſom its own terrene part, (not without a Sacredneſs, and a rich Perfume adhering to that alſo.)

And as it is not our only, or more principal buſineſs to Mourn, ſo nor is

it to relieve, and fortifie our ſelves againſt Mourning. We have ſomewhat to do, divers from them both, and that is more conſiderable than either of them. We are chiefly *ſo* to conſider his Death, *as* may beſt ſerve the purpoſes of our own yet-continuing Life, which was the ſcope of that deſire of his ſignified by *his Will*, that *an Inſtructive Sermon might be* (upon that occaſion) *Preacht to the People*. We are to ſet our ſelves to learn from it, what doth moſt concern our own *daily practice* and *hope*; So to acquit our ſelves as not to neglect *the duty* of *good and faithful Servants* to our common Lord, nor to come ſhott of *their Reward*.

And to this purpoſe we are more to conſider his *life* than his *death*. The Life which he hath liv'd on Earth, and the Life which (we have reaſon not to doubt) he doth live in Heaven.

Nor could my thoughts reflect upon any portion of Scripture more fit for our purpoſe, or that was more ſutable to *him* and *us*, *i. e.* that could more aptly

aptly ſerve to deſcribe him, and Inſtruct our ſelves; nor have I known any perſon to have left the World, within my time, to whom this Text of Scripture might more fitly be apply'd.

I ſhall only obſerve and Inſiſt upon theſe two Heads of Diſcourſe from it,

The *Character* of *ſuch a Servant.* And,

The *Treatment* which he finds at laſt from his *Heavenly Maſter.*

Firſt, His Character. He is ſaid to have *done well*, or 'tis ſaid to him εὖ, *well*, (no more is there in the Greek Text.) And then he is further beſpoken as a *good* and *faithful Servant*, *more generally*, and *particularly* his *fidelity* is commended *in reference to* the ſpecial truſt and Charge which is imply'd to have been committed to him: *Thou haſt been faithful in a few things*; I have not over-charg'd thee, and thou haſt acceptably diſcharg'd thy ſelf.

Some think *this* (and the whole Parable) to belong only to the Miniſters

of the Goſpel, the Servants of Chriſt in that ſpecial ſence. I do not ſee a reaſon for that reſtriction. The words are of themſelves capable of being extended further, to the faithful Servants of Chriſt in whatſoever capacity; thô being ſpoken to the Diſciples, as from the continuation of the Diſcourſe (with this Evangeliſt) from the beginning of the foregoing Chapter may be Collected, it ſeems not unfit to allow them a more particular reference to their ſpecial Office and truſt.

And here we muſt note that theſe words of Commendation [*Well done good and faithful Servant*] do ſpeak both *the Truth of the thing* and the *Judgment and eſtimate* which his Lord makes thereof accordingly.

We are *now* to conſider them under the *former notion*, as they expreſs *the truth of the thing*, the *matter of Fact*, whereof we cannot have a more certain account, than (as here we have it) from *his Mouth*, who imploy'd him, was his conſtant Superviſor, muſt be his final Judge, and will be his bountiful Rewarder at length. We

We ſhall here, in opening his Character, Note,

Firſt, *Some things leading and Introductive*, or that belong to his *entrance* into this *Service*. And,

Secondly, *Some things* that belong to his *performance afterward.*

Firſt, For the Introductive, ſuppoſed part of his Character. He is

1. *One that hath Diſclaimed all former and other Maſters:* All in Coordination, for *of ſuch, no man can ſerve two: Other Lords had Dominion* over him, but by *their Uſurpation*, and *his unjuſt Conſent*, who was not his own, and had no right to diſpoſe of himſelf. The faithful Servant Repents, and retracts thoſe former engagements, as Bonds of Iniquity, by which he will be no longer held, renounces any former inconſiſtent *Maſter* or *Service*: A *truly ſubordinate Maſter* he muſt own for the ſame reaſon upon which he acknowledges the Supream, and do all that ſuch derived Authority challenges, by his direction who gave it; *Otherwiſe*, he hath learned *to call no man Maſter on Earth.*

2. *He is one that hath by Covenant ſurrender'd and reſign'd himſelf to this great Lord and his Service:* Some *Relations* have their foundation in Nature; *this* of *Servants* to a *Maſter*, (we except Slaves) in their Conſent, or in mutual contract; and thô this *general Relation* between *God* and *Man*, have the moſt *deeply natural foundation* imaginable, whereupon *all are his Servants*; yet the *ſpecial Relation* muſt have the *other ground*, *viz.* That of *Conſent*, or *Contract* ſuperadded; not to give God a *right to our Service*, but more expreſly and effectually to *oblige our ſelves* to it, and that *we may have a right to his Rewards.* 'Tis but acknowledging and recognizing his *former Right* in us, which is part (*and the initial part*) of our Duty to him. He requires and juſtly inſiſts upon it, to be acknowledged as our only rightful Lord; which till we do, we are in Rebellion againſt him, and in the Condition *of Servants broke away from their Maſters*, *Run-aways*, Fugitives, and who keep our ſelves out of the Family; and thô *that* cannot, however,

however, deſtroy *his Right*, yet it is inconſiſtent with *our Duty*, for our Service muſt be throughout voluntary, and *with our Reward*, for nothing that is not voluntary, is Rewardable. Therefore the *good and faithful Servant in* the Text, is one that affects and chooſes *the State*, firſt, and ſayes with the Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 119. 38.) — *Thy Servant who is devoted to thy Fear:* And (*Pſal.* 116. 16.) *Oh Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant, the Son of thy Hand-maid; thou haſt looſed my Bonds.* He doth as is required, *Rom.* 6. 13, 19. *Yields himſelf to God*, and all his parts and Powers *Servants of Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs.* He reckons it neither *Dutiful towards God*, nor *Comfortable to himſelf*, to do him only *occaſional Service*, but *ad libitum*, and as an *unrelated Perſon:* He thinks it not Honourable to the great Lord of Heaven and Earth but to *Borrow* (as it were) *anothers Servant*, nor can he ſatisfie himſelf, *not to be of the Family*, therefore he conſents firſt to the Relation, and enters himſelf his *Covenant-ſervant*. *Faithfulneſs*

ſuppo-

ſuppoſes *having Covenanted*, and hath the ſame reference to *our part of the Covenant*, that *Gods faithfulneſs hath to his.*

3. *He is one that hath thereupon made it his earneſt Study to know his Lords will:* His firſt enquiry is, *What wilt thou have me to do, Lord?* he is ſolicitous to underſtand the Duty of his Station, *Pſal.* 119. 125. *I am thy Servant, give me Underſtanding, that I may know thy Teſtimonies:* To enter one's ſelf the Servant of another, without any concern to know the buſineſs of his place, ſhews an inſincere mind, and argues he hath more a deſign to ſerve himſelf upon his Maſter, than to ſerve him.

4. *He is one that hath an inclination to the work he is to do when he knows it*, a προθυμία, an inclining bent of mind to it. *That* which the *Scripture* means by *having the Law of God written in the heart.* Spoken of our Lord himſelf in reference to that peculiar Service he was to perform. *Lo I come to do thy will, O God, thy Law is in my heart.* Pſal. 40. 8. Who thô *he were a*

Son,

Son, yet taking the *form of a ſervant*, apply'd himſelf to that ſevere part aſſign'd him, *with a moſt willing mind*; and had, hereupon, the higheſt approbation imaginable. *Iſa.* 42. 1. *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth.* And it is ſpoken of all the *inferiour true ſervants* of God beſides, *Jer.* 31. 33. *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* 'Tis the *ſame thing* with being *Gods workmanſhip*, (Epheſ. 2. 10.) *created unto good works*; and with that *readines* to every good work, (ἕτοιμος εἶναι,) *Tit.* 3. 1. If a mans heart be not ſo framed to Gods Service, how awkwardly and untowardly, does he go about any thing that is enjoyn'd him, he is habitually *diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* Tit. 1. 14.

Secondly, And for *that part of the Character*, which *being a good and faithful ſervant*, includes

1. *He is one that endeavours to extend his obedience to the whole compas of his duty*; hath an univerſal reſpect *to all Gods commandments.* Is not *partial in the Law.*

2. *He*

2. *He peculiarly minds the work moſt, of his own ſtation.* Thinks it not enough, or poſſible, to be a good Chriſtian, and at the ſame time an ill Magiſtrate, Miniſter, Parent, Maſter of a Family, or Servant in it, if it be his lot to be in any of theſe capacities.

3. *He is diligent* in all the Service that belongs to him any way; *not ſlothful in buſineſs, fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11.

4. *He is with moſt delight exerciſed in the moſt ſpiritual part of his work.* In the great, vital acts, of *faith, love, ſelf-devoting*, and thoſe moſt immediately proceeding from them, *meditation, prayer* and *praiſe*.

5. *He balks not the moſt hazardous or more coſtly part.* Thinks it mean to ſerve God at no expence, or with what coſts him nothing. Meaſures not his duty, by the advantage, or ſafety of his own ſecular Intereſt. So as to decline it when nothing is to be got by it, or if any thing be in danger to be loſt.

6. *He grudges not that others are leſs ex-*

expos'd to danger in their work, than he. And have that liberty of ſerving God which he hath not.

Let me ſeriouſly recommend this Property and Diſpoſition of a faithful Servant to my Brethren in the Miniſtry. While *ſome* have Opportunity of ſerving our great and common Lord without fear of the interruption and ſuffering, to which *we* are liable, and when we have reaſon to judge they do it with ſincerity (thô we may think they gained their greater liberty by their miſtake) there can be no more genuine expreſſion of our *fidelity*, and *ſincere devotedneſs* to our Maſters Intereſt, than *to behold, with complacency*, all the good which we obſerve done by them. If the great Apoſtle *rejoyced*, and declared *he would rejoyce* that *Chriſt was preached, thô not ſincerely (and whether in pretence or truth)* much more ſhould we, when we ought to judge that he is ſincerely preached. And if he envy'd not thoſe that preached Chriſt even *of envy*, How horrid would it be, ſhould we behold with envy, what we are Phil. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18.

to

to ſuppoſe done *out of love, and good will.* They are great admirers of themſelves, and lovers of ſome Intereſt of their own more than his, that cannot endure to ſee his work done by other hands, than theirs. Or that have nothing of that diſpoſition in them which thoſe words expreſſe, *Let him increaſe and me decreaſe.*

7. He is much leſs apt to *ſmite his fellow-ſervants*, or hinder them in their work, unles they will work by *his rule and meaſure*, unpreſcribed by their Lord himſelf. He takes no pleaſure to ſee the hands ty'd up of uſeful *Labourers in the harveſt*, wiſhes not their number diminiſht, but becauſe *the harveſt is really plenteous, but the labourers are few, rather prayes the Lord of the harveſt to ſend forth labourers into his harveſt.* Mat. 9. 37, 38.

If any of their own private Inclination, would have the *neceſſary work* of their Lord hindered, and take Pleaſure in the excluſion of induſtrious Labourers, for their conſcientious diſuſe of things, *by their own Confeſſion, not neceſſary.*

ceſſary. Good Lord! *What Spirit are they are of?* I underſtand it not; nor *Let my Soul enter into their ſecret!* I had rather a thouſandfold *bear their Anger*, than *be of their Spirit!* Would any faithful Servant rather wiſh his Maſters work ſhould be in any part undone, than done by thoſe he diſlikes, upon no more important reaſon than that their Cloaths perhaps are not of the ſame colour with his?

But thanks be to God that among thoſe that differ from each other *in the leſſer things* there are ſo many that rejoyce, being under reſtraints themſelves, for the Liberty of others, and that mourn, while they enjoy themſelves an ample Liberty, for others reſtraints, and among whom there is no other contention, but who ſhall think, and ſpeak, and act, with moſt kindneſs towards one another: And that *not whole parties*, but an ill mind and Spirit *only in ſome Perſons*, can be charg'd with what ſo much unbecomes faithful Fellow-ſervants.

8. *He is leſs at leaſure to mind what others*

others do or do not, than what he is to do himſelf. Is above all things ſolicitous *to prove his own work, that he may have rejoycing in himſelf, and not in another,* Gal. 6. 4.

9. *He eſteems the utmoſt he can do but little*; and counts *when he hath done his beſt, he is an unprofitable Servant.*

10. *He approves himſelf in all that he doth to the eye of his great Maſter.* Here we cannot ſerve too much with Eye-ſervice, or be too apprehenſive of the conſtant Inſpection of our heavenly Lord. One may be too much a pleaſer of Men, but no man can too much Study to pleaſe, and approve himſelf to the eye of God.

11. *He laments loſt time*, and labours to redeem it.

12. *He greatly rejoyces in the ſucceſs of his Work.* If, for inſtance, it be his buſineſs to bring home Souls to God, nothing is more grateful to him than to proſper in it. *My Beloved, my Joy, and my Crown,* — (Philip. 4. 1.) So he counts ſuch as he can make Proſelytes to Chriſt: *I have no greater Joy, than*

than to hear that my Children walk in truth: Joh. 3. 4. 'Tis ſaid of *Barnabas*, (*a great number believing and turning to the Lord,*) Acts 11. 22, 23. that, *When he ſaw the Grace of God, he was glad; For* ('tis added) *he was a good Man, and full of the Holy Ghoſt.*

13. *He loves his work and his Maſter,* is willing to have his Ear bored and ſerve him for ever. If any thought ariſes of changing, he preſently repreſſes it by ſome ſeaſonable check, and counter-thought †, and confirms his Reſolution of cleaving to him unto the end.

† As Holy Mr. *Herbert.*

—Well, I will change the Service, and go ſeek
Some other maſter out.
Ah my dear God! tho I be clean forgot,
Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.

14. *He puts the higheſt value upon ſuch preſent encouragements from his Lord, as are moſt expreſſive of peculiar favour.* The bleſſed God knows what is moſt ſuitable to the *Genius* and *Spirit* of his own *New Creature:* They who are his *ſincere Servants*, are his *Sons* too, born of him, and to the divine and heavenly Nature in them, thoſe things are moſt

agreeable that are moſt Spiritual, and whereof others of terrene minds, no more know the value, than that Dunghil-creature did of the Gem it found there: They muſt have great Stores of *Corn*, *Wine* and *Oyl*. His *better born* ſervants are of *a more excellent Spirit*, and better pleaſed with the *light of his Countenance*; he differently treats them accordingly. As that victorious *Perſian Monarch* *, entertaining at a Feaſt, the principal Men of his Army, gave among them coſtly Gifts; but for *Chryſantas*, a more peculiar Favourite (ἐφίλεσε προσαγόμενος,) *he only drew him near to him, and gave him a Kiſs*; which was intended by the *one*, received by the *other*, and envy'd by a † *third*, as an expreſſion of more ſpecial kindneſs. And of the *Divine love*, which that borrowed expreſſion ſignifies, Pious Souls, upon all occaſions, ſhew their higheſt value, *Cant.* 1. 2.

* *Cyrus.*

Xen. de Ped. Cyr.

† *Artabazus* who had a golden Cup given him at the ſame time.

15. *He truſts his Maſter for his final Reward, and is content to wait for it, as long as he thinks fit to defer.* St. *Paul* profeſſes himſelf *a Servant of God, and an*

an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, in *hope of Eternal life*, which *he that could not lye had promiſed*, and hereupon reſolvedly encounters all the difficulties of that hazardous Service.

II. The *Acceptance* and *Reward* which ſuch a Servant finds above. *His Acceptance* is expreſt in the ſame words, (as was ſaid) which have generally given us his Character, not only ſhewing what he *was*, and *did*, but that his Lord eſteem'd, and paſſes an *approving judgment* of him (as it was not to be doubted he would) accordingly.

Concerning this *Judgment* we are to note, both what it *ſuppoſes*, and what it *includes*.

It *ſuppoſes* both an *account* taken how this Servant demean'd himſelf, and a *Rule* according whereto the matters to be accounted for, were to be examin'd and judg'd of.

1. *That our Lord calls his Servants to an account*; ſo we find it *expreſly ſaid* verſ. 19. *After a long time, the Lord of thoſe Servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.* And *here* 'tis *imply'd*, when he

ſayes, *Well done*— it implies he takes Cogniſance, and enquires whether they have done well or ill, he is not indifferent or regardleſs how they quit and behave themſelves; nor doth he pronounce raſhly, and at randome, without ſearching into the matter. *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God*, Rom. 14. 12.

2. That there is *ſome certain ſtated Rule*, by which their doings muſt be meaſured. *Well doing* ſtands in conformity to ſome Rule or other; and what is the *next* and moſt immediate *rule* of *our Duty*, is alſo the *rule* of *Gods Judgment*: *Such a Rule* it muſt ſuppoſe as according whereto *a true Judgment is poſſible*, of *our having done well*. That cannot be the *Law of works*, according whereto *no fleſh can be Juſtified in his ſight*; It muſt therefore be the *Law of Grace*: And ſo *this Servant* is only ſaid to have *done well* according to the ὁμοίωσιν *Evangelica*. The Indulgence of the *Goſpel* can ſay εὖ, *it is well*, to that which the rigour of the *Law* would condemn. *Bonum oritur ex cauſis integris*, &c.

Well

Well doing ariſes out of the concurrence of all requiſites; Evil from any the leaſt defect; and ſo indeed whatever the rule be, all things muſt concur that are requiſite to acceptance by that rule. But here *ſimply every thing of Duty* is requiſite; ſo that the *condition of acceptance and life* was not to be diſtinguiſht (as a thing of leſs latitude) from *meer Duty* in its utmoſt extent. *Jam.* 2. 10. *For whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them,* Gal. 3. 10.

2. This Judgment *includes,*

1. *Well-pleaſedneſs:* εὖ, *'Tis well,* q. d. I like well thy way and work, it pleaſes and is grateful to me, and ſo art thou.

2. *An acknowledgment of his Title* to the deſigned Reward, according to the Goſpel conſtitution. 'Tis ſaid to be well not only according to the abſolute and abſtract conſideration of what was done, but according to its relative conſideration

ſideration and proſpect to what was to enſue; and therefore follows in the ſubjoyned words, the collation of the Reward, of which Reward we have here a twofold expreſſion, *I will make thee Ruler over many things; enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

1. *I will make thee Ruler over many things:*] In the Evangeliſt *Luke*'s account of this Parable (if his account refer to the ſame thing, as ſpoken at the ſame time, which ſome of old, upon the manifold diverſity, have doubled, how reaſonably I ſhall not here diſpute) 'tis ſaid, *Have thou authority over* ſo many *Cities.* Either expreſſion repreſents the remuneration here vouchſafed by a *Metaphor*, which nearly approaches that very uſual one, by which the Felicity of Saints is repreſented under the notion of a *Kingdom*, *q. d.* Thou ſhalt have an *honourable Prefecture*, be a glorious *Viceroy*, ſhalt according to thy capacity, ſhare with me in the dignity of my Royal State; *If we Suffer, we ſhall alſo Reign with him*, 2 Tim. 2. 12. This I paſs, and ſhall ſtay a little more upon

upon the other Expreſſion which is plainer, and without a *Metaphor*.

2. *Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*] Wherein, as Expoſitors obſerve, our Lord ſlides inſenſibly out of the Parable, into the thing deſigned by it, uſing words indifferently applicable to either, but ſuch as wherein he might be eaſily underſtood, ultimately to mean the *Joyes and Glories of the other World or State.* Expreſſions ſerving to ſignifie, as an Ancient ſpeaks, τὸ πᾶσαν μακαρίότητα, *the ſumme of all Felicity*, as what can more fitly ſignifie that than *Joy*, *the Joy of his Lord*, and *whereinto he was to enter?* Chryſoſt. in loc.

Let us conſider theſe ſeverally, thô but briefly.

1. *Joy.*] *q. d.* The laborious part is over with thee, now follows thy reſt and Reward. *Joy*, the very notion whereof is reſt, *quies appetitus in appetibili*; (as it is aptly defined;) *They that ſow in tears ſhall reap in joy.* When the dark ſhady Vale is paſt over, with much toyl, the Path of Life leads into that *Preſence where is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore.* The *fulneſs of joy* Aquin. Pſal. 16.

ſpeaks the *purity* of it ; that is *pure* which is *plenum ſui*, &c. full of it ſelf, and without mixture of any thing elſe ; which hath ſo entirely all degrees of it ſelf, as not to admit the leaſt degree of its contrary : Such is *this*, 'tis *joy and no ſorrow with it* ; Perfect and moſt compleat Joy. This cannot therefore be meant of a *ſlight and momentary Act*, but *a perfect and permanent ſtate of joy :* which *ſtate* is made up by the continual concurrence of a twofold everlaſting perfection,

Viz. { Objective, Subjective.

1. *Objective*, That there be a perfect, and never failing *good* to be enjoy'd.

2. *Subjective*, That there be a perfect and immutable contemperation, or a through undecaying diſpoſition of the ſubject to the enjoyment of it.

From theſe two cannot but reſult a moſt *permanent, everlaſting ſtate of Joy.*

And of the concurrence of theſe two, the holy Scripture ſufficiently aſſures us,

us, when it makes *God himſelf* to be the object of our eternal viſion in that other ſtate; and tells us that in order thereto, *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*; ſignifying all that proportion and agreeableneſs of the bleſſed Soul to the beatific Object, which is requiſite to a moſt pleaſant, perfect and perpetual enjoyment.

2. *This Joy* is more expreſly ſpecifi'd by being called *the joy of our Lord*; which ſignifies it to be not only, 1. *The joy wherof he is the object*, a Joy to be taken in him, (as before:) But 2. *Whereof he is the Authour*; as he now *puts gladneſs into the Heart*, in this our imperfect ſtate, he is not leſs the Authour of our moſt perfect Joy. And 3. Alſo *that whereof he is the poſſeſſour*, q. d. Enter into that Joy that is now to be common to me and thee, and wherein thou ſhalt partake with me. So one gloſſes the words; *Be thou partaker of the ſame Joy with thy Lord, enjoy thou the ſame Joy that thy Lord enjoyes.* Amazing thought! yet ſo Scripture ſpeaks. *Where I am there alſo ſhall my Servant be.* Joh.

Pſal. 4.

Eſto particeps, &c. Luc. Bragenſ. in loc.

Joh. 12. 26. *The glory which thou gaveſt me I have given them*; and verſ. 24. *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me*; and that *beholding* cannot mean a meerly *contemplative* but a fruitive intuition. *If ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo* glorified together, (συνδοξασθῶμεν) *Rom.* 8. 17. Other joyes are in compariſon mean and ſordid, this is the higheſt and moſt excellent, for it is the Divine Joy.

3. 'Tis *that* they are to *enter into*, which notes both the *plenitude of their Right*; Their Lord bids them enter: and the *plenitude of this Joy it ſelf*; they are *to enter into it*, and the dominion it muſt for ever have over them, they are to be abſorp't of it, loſe themſelves in it, not ſo much to poſſeſs it, as be poſſeſt by it. And the *perpetuity* is intimated of that poſſeſſion. We are told of their *entrance into it*, nothing of their paſſing out of it any more. The laſt thing we hear of them is *that they are gone into Joy.*

Now

Now let us ſee what brief uſeful reflections are to be made upon all this. And, USE.

1. How bleſſed a thing is it to be a faithful Servant of Chriſt! if any have not yet learnt to value his ſervice *for it ſelf*, let them make their eſtimate *by the end of it*, and by what is even at preſent moſt certainly annexed to it. *To be accepted with him!* to appear gracious in his eyes! An *Euge* from ſuch a mouth! *Where the word of a King is there is power.* How joyful a ſound do theſe words carry *from the mouth of God, Well done good and faithful Servant!* The *Perſic verſion* (as it is render'd) moſt ſignificantly Paraphraſes this Paſſage; *The owner of the Money received him pleaſantly, and uttered words to him grateful to his Heart, ſaying, Well done, O thou good and faithful ſervant*, &c. What can be more grateful and reviving to the heart of a good man, than that the glorious Lord of Heaven and Earth ſhould ſay to him, *Well done?* To have him ſay to us as to *Moſes, Thou haſt*

Dominus pecuniæ illum blandè excepit, & cordi verba grata dedit; Euge, inquit, O bone & fidelis ſerve, &c.

haſt found Grace in my ſight, Exod. 33. 12. *To have gained this Teſtimony*, as *Enoch* did, *Heb.* 11. 5. *That we have pleaſed God*; and that our Caſe might truely admit of ſuch an Angelical Salutation, (thô upon a leſs peculiar account) *Hail thou that art highly favoured?* how great a thing is it! So great a thing in the Apoſtles account, that living or dying, *being in the body* or *out of the body*, ſeem'd little things to him in compariſon of it: *He was willing rather to be abſent*, but is more ſolicitous *whether preſent or abſent, that he might be accepted of him*, 2 Cor. 5. 8, 9. Yea, and the more abject ſpirit of a very *Cain*, reſents ſo deeply his *not being accepted*, that his troubled mind imprints Characters of Sorrow in his Face, ſhews it ſelf in a fallen Countenance, and dejected looks.

What ingenuous mind but knows how to value, even the (unprofitable) kindneſs of a mean Friend: Can the Love of a God ſeem little with us? it addes greatly to the value of meer Kindneſs, abſtracted from Beneficence, if

If it be born me by a judicious, wiſe perſon, ſuch a one honours whom he loves; we leſs eſteem the love of a Fool; there can be no greater contempt of God, than to make light of being accepted with him.

But how tranſporting a thing ſhould it be, beſides the preſent ſence of ſuch acceptance, which (with more or leſs expreſneſs) accompanies diligence and fidelity in his Service, to have it judicially declared with ſolemnity, and publickly ſaid to us, before Angels and men, *Well done good and faithful Servant?* when ſo great conſequences depend and are to enſue upon it; as that it ſhould be further ſaid, *Come, be thou Ruler over many things, Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*; Enter into the Joy of your Lord. Who would think meanly of being the accepted Servant of the moſt high God? They that finally deſpiſe ſo Priviledg'd a State, will ſee it with their eyes, (exemplifi'd in others) but ſhall never taſt the ſweetneſs of it.

2. How eaſily accountable is it why our

our Lord lets his Servants ſuffer hard things in this World a while? *He* may permit it to be ſo, who hath it in his Power *to make their Sorrow be turn'd into Joy:* It is not ſtrange if *Weeping endure with them for a night*, unto whom ſuch *Joy is coming in the morning*; it is unworthy to repine in this Caſe. 'Tis want of foreſight that makes any wonder and cenſure. Conſider well thoſe weighty words, 1 *Pet.* 4. 12, 13. *Beloved, think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as thô ſome ſtrange thing happened unto you; But rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings, that when his Glory ſhall be revealed, ye may be glad alſo with exceeding Joy.*

3. How wicked and fooliſh a thing is it to refuſe this Service? 'tis horridly unjuſt towards our moſt rightful Lord, and moſt imprudent for our ſelves: Do men know what they do in this? whoſe right they invade and reſiſt? and what Cruelty they uſe towards their own Souls?

4. How much to be lamented is the eon-

condition of the ſinful World, who ſo generally decline this Service, and make themſelves Slaves in the mean time to the worſt of Maſters? how do men drudge to the Devil? what Slaves are they to themſelves and their own vile Luſts? As indeed no man ſerves himſelf, but hath a Fool and a mad Tyrant (as one well ſayes) for his Maſter. We do not enough live up to the Principles of our Religion, while we conſider not with more compaſſion the condition of infatuated Mankind in this reſpect.

5. What may be expected by unfaithful negligent Servants that hide their Talent in a Napkin? The others Joyes ſerve to meaſure their Sorrows; what a killing word will it be, when inſtead of *Well done good and faithful Servant*, it ſhall be ſaid, *Thou wicked and ſlothful Servant!* and inſtead of *Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord*, they muſt hear and feel, *Caſt ye the unprofitable Servant into outer darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, (verſ. 30.)

6. See

6. See what eſtimate we are to make of the *nature of God*, eſpecially of his *large, munificent goodneſs* (which is his nature, *God is love*:) For conſider the various emanations and diſcoveries of it, which may here be taken notice of.

1. That he ſhould ſeek to have any for ſervants (which the text ſuppoſeth that he doth) in this world of ours! A world of Apoſtate, Degenerous, Impure, Impotent creatures, diſaffected to him and his Government, hating him, and (as in themſelves they are) hateful to him. He who hath ſo little need of ſervants for any real uſe! who can do all things with a word! And if he thought it fit to have them for ſtate, and as a thing becoming his majeſty and greatneſs, is attended, above, by ſo excellent God-like Creatures! So ſuitable, and obſequious! So powerful and agile! *Thoſe miniſters of his that do his pleaſure, hearkening to the voice of his word.* A World of miniſtring Spirits that might be uſed for purpoſes leſs kind to us than they are! That he ſhould

ſhould ſeek Servants among us! (for his having them implies it, who ever ſerv'd him unſought unto?) invite men into his ſervice with ſo importunate ſolicitation! whom he might deſpiſe for their vileneſs, and deſtroy for their rebellion, which he can in a moment! And that he ſhould ſeek *ſuch* to become his Servants, not with indifferency, but with ſo great earneſtneſs! and uſe afterwards ſo various endeavours to retain them in his ſervice! When they gradually decline, that he ſo graciouſly upholds them; when ready to break faith with him, and quit his ſervice, that by ſo apt methods he confirms them; when they actually wander and turn Vagabonds, that he ſhouid be ſo intent to reduce them! How admirable is all this! View the whole caſe at once. They neglect his firſt Invitations, he repeats and inculcates them; They faint, he encourages and ſupports them; They revolt, he follows to bring them back: The cauſe of our admiration ſtill riſes higher and higher. How much is it, in this laſt inſtance

above all humane meaſures! Moſt men would diſdain ſo to ſue to Servants that forſake them, and are loath to confeſs their *real need* and want of them (were it never ſo great:) The *Cynick* ſcorn'd to look after his ſervant that left him, counting it a diſgrace when *Manes* thought he could live without *Diogenes*, that *Diogenes* ſhould not be able to live without *Manes*. The *All-ſufficient Deity* ſtoops to that which *indigency* and *wretchedneſs* think even too mean for them!

Gen.

2. Conſider *the frankneſs of his acceptance, even of the beſt:* for how many omiſſions, how much lazieneſs and ſloth, how many incogitancies and miſtakes, how much real diſſervice muſt he forgive when he accepts them, and ſays (yet) *'Tis well done?* How little is it they do at the beſt? and how unprofitable to him? and yet that little alſo he forms and even creates them to, and continually ſuccours, and aſſiſts them in it; *Works in them to will and to do.* Otherwiſe nothing at all would be done, and yet how full, how com-

pla-

placential his acceptance is!

3. Conſider the *largeneſs and bounty of his rewards*, too large for our expreſſion or conception. So that we even ſay moſt to it, when (even loſt in wonder) we only admire and ſay nothing.

4. Conſider *the kind of the Service* which he thus beſpeaks, accepts, and rewards. The beſt and moſt *acceptable ſervice* any are capable of doing him, is when they *accept him*, take and chuſe him to be their *portion*, and *bleſſedneſs*. Truſt, love and delight in him as ſuch, live upon his fulneſs, and (according to their ſeveral ſtations) perſwade as many as they can to do ſo too. They that in the moſt peculiar ſence are his *Miniſters* or *Servants*, as they are more earneſtly intent *upon this*, and win more Souls, are the more amply and gloriouſly rewarded. *They that turn many to righteouſnes, ſhine as ſtars.* And for all the reſt of his Servants, wherein do they ſerve him moſt, but when by their converſe and example, they induce others to entertain good thoughts

of *God*, and *Religion*, and thereupon to make the *ſame Choice* which they have made, and become ſeriouſly Religious, which is moſt certainly connected with their being happy, and indeed in greateſt part, their very Happineſs it ſelf. And when they relieve, ſupport, encourage, and help on thoſe that are in the way, or whom they are endeavouring to bring into the way to final bleſſedneſs! We as much need our ſervants, as they can us; they are our living, reaſonable, but moſt neceſſary inſtruments. The whole univerſe of created beings ſubſiſts by mutual dependencies; the uncreated being without any. Creatures are made to need one another. Infinite ſelf-fulneſs, not capable of receiving additions, is moſt highly gratified by our chearful reception of its communications.

Let us learn now to conceive of God anſwerably to all this: *We do him not right*, that we conſider not his admirable goodneſs, in ſo plain inſtances of it, with more frequent ſeriouſneſs and intention of mind and Spirit, and *ſhew our*

our ſelves ſtupid, unapprehenſive Creatures; have we a thinking faculty about us? a power to uſe thoughts? and can we uſe it upon any thing more evident, more conſiderable, or that more concerns us? or do we never uſe it leſs pertinently?

7. How unreaſonable is it either to quit the Service of our bleſſed Lord, or to ſerve him dejectedly? Quit it! Who hath more right in us? or where will we mend our ſelves? O the treacherous folly of Apoſtacy! and how ſeverely is it wont to be animadverted on! 2 *Chron.* 12. 1. 'Tis ſaid *Rehoboam forſook the Law of the Lord, and all Iſrael with him:* And what followed? *Shiſhak* the King of *Egypt* comes againſt them with a great power, and God ſends them this Meſſage by *Shemaiah* the Prophet, that *Becauſe they had forſaken him,* (verſ. 5.) *therefore he alſo had left them in the hands of Shiſhak:* and afterwards that thô *upon their humbling themſelves, he would not quite deſtroy them,* but grant them *ſome deliverance*; yet he adds, *nevertheleſs ye ſhall*

be his (i. e. *Shiſhak*'s) *Servants, that ye may know my Service, and the Service of the Kingdoms of the Countreys,* verſ. 8. Since they would abandon *God* and the *true Religion*, he would by a very ſenſible inſtruction, and coſtly experience teach them to diſtinguiſh, and underſtand the difference, and make them know when they have a good Maſter; and if we ſerve him deſpondingly, and with dejected Spirits, how cauſeleſs a Reproach do we caſt upon him and his Service? 'tis a greater iniquity than is commonly conſidered, implies diſlike of his work, and the rules and orders of the Family, impatiency of the reſtraints of it, diſtruſt of his Power to protect, or Bounty to reward us; and we may expect it to be reſented accordingly; ſo we ſometimes find it hath been, *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. *Becauſe thou ſervedſt not the Lord thy God with joyfulneſs and with gladneſs of Heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore ſhalt thou ſerve thine Enemies which the Lord ſhall ſend againſt thee, in hunger and in thirſt, and in nakedneſs, and in want of*

of all things, and he ſhall put a yoke of Iron upon thy neck, until he have deſtroyed thee.

8. How are we concern'd to follow the Example, and expect the acceptance and reward of any ſuch faithful Servant of Chriſt.

And that we may imitate ſuch a good and faithful Servant, let me briefly ſet the example of *ſuch a one* before you, in *this excellent perſon* lately taken from among us; which were it poſſible to repreſent *entirely*, were one of the *faireſt Copies* to write after, that *this*, or perhaps *many former ages* could afford us.

That indeed, which it is fit ſhould firſt, be noted of him, is leaſt of all imitable. I mean his *natural temper* (with its more immediate dependencies) which no man can have the priviledge to chooſe. *His* indeed was one of the happieſt that I ever knew: And did ſo ſet off all that was ſuperadded and inſerted into it, by humane culture or divine Grace, as an *advantageous ſetting*

doth the luſtre of a Diamond. He had all the advantages of Education from his Childhood, which the pious care of an affectionate, prudent, learned Father could give him, that were proper, and preparatory to the Function he was intended for: *viz. that of the ſacred Miniſtry.* An Office whereof his excellent Father (the eminent, holy, heavenly, reverend, ancient *Mr. Fairclough* of *Suffolk*, whoſe Name in that Countrey hath ſtill a grateful ſavour with all good men of whatſoever perſwaſion,) ſhewed his high eſteem and love, not only by the moſt diligent diſcharge of it himſelf, but by dedicating all his Sons (which were *four* in number) to it, and giving his *two Daughters* in Marriage to ſuch alſo. So that he was the *Father* of a *Sacred Tribe*, an Offſpring and Race of Miniſters, or that (even naturally) united with ſuch. *This* was the *eldeſt* of his Children, and of whoſe Education the firſt care was to be taken. Scarce any Mind could be more receptive of the proper impreſſions from an ingenuous Inſtitu-

tion.

tion. About twelve Years he continu'd a *Student* (whereof divers, a *Fellow*) and great *Ornament* of *Emanuel Colledge* in *Cambridge*, as he was alſo much *adorned* by it. He went from it furniſhed with ſuch a ſtock of rational, ſubſtantial, as well as polite Literature, that ſhew'd him to have been no Loiterer there. He was a man of a clear, diſtinct underſtanding, of a very quick, diſcerning and penetrating Judgment, that would, on a ſudden (as I have ſometimes obſerved in diſcourſe with him) ſtrike through knotty difficulties into the inward Center of Truth, with ſuch a felicity that things ſeem'd to offer themſelves to him, which are wont to coſt others a troubleſome ſearch. Nor were his Notions meerly Book-learnt, borrowed from Syſtems, and taken on truſt, but formed by a due (but more ſpeedy) comparing of things, as if Truth were more a-kin, and connatural to him than to moſt others, ſooner digeſted, made his own, and inwrought into the temper and habit of his Mind, which afterwards,

he

he liked not to muddy and diſcompoſe by buſie agitations with others about that Truth which he found himſelf in a pleaſant ſecure poſſeſſion of, nor to contend concerning that which he had not found it neceſſary to contend for; he declined Controverſie, not from inability but diſlike; for as he leſs needed it for a further good end, ſo he was moſt remote from loving it for it ſelf; he was ſatisfy'd to have attained his end, and was better pleaſed to know, than to ſeem to others that he knew; he was of a curious ſublime Fancy, and a lofty Style both in ſpeaking and writing, even in his moſt familiar Letters, thô he induſtriouſly depreſt it in his popular Sermons, and other Negotiations with thoſe of meaner capacity.

But his Moral, and holy Excellencies were his chief Luſtre, being in themſelves of a more excellent kind, and ſhining in him in a very eminent degree.

The bent of his Soul was towards God; I never knew any man under the more con-

conſtant governing power of Religion, which made it be his buſineſs both to exerciſe and diffuſe it to his uttermoſt; he was a mighty Lover of God and Men; and being of a lively active Spirit, that Love was his facile, potent mover to the doing even of all the good that could be thought (in an ordinary way) poſſible to him, and more than was poſſible to moſt other men: To give a true ſuccinct account of the complexion of his Soul, he was even made up *of Life and Love*. Such was the clearneſs and ſincerity of his Spirit, his conſtant Uprightneſs and Integrity, ſo little darkned by an *evil Conſcience*, (and indeed, little ever clouded with melancholy Fumes) that he ſeemed to live in the conſtant ſence of Gods favour and acceptance, and had nothing to do but to ſerve him with his might; whence his Spirit was formed to an *habitual Chearfulneſs*, and ſeem'd to feel within it ſelf a continual Calm. So undiſturb'd a Serenity hath to my obſervation rarely been diſcernable in any man; nor was his a dull, ſluggiſh

Peace,

Peace, but vital, and joyous; ſeldom hath that been more exemplify'd in any man, *Rom.* 8. 6. *To be Spiritually minded is Life and Peace:* Seldom have any liv'd more under the Government of that *Kingdom which ſtands in Righteouſneſs, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt,* Rom. 14. 17. His Reverence of the Divine Majeſty was moſt profound, his thoughts of God high and great, that ſeem'd totally to have compos'd him to Adoration, and even made him live a worſhipping life; he was not wont to ſpeak to God or of him at a vulgar rate; he was moſt abſolutely reſigned and given up to him; *Devotedneſs* to his Intereſt, *Acquieſcence* in his Wiſdom and Will, were not *meer Precepts* with him but *Habits.* No man could be more deeply concern'd about the *affairs of Religion,* and *Gods Intereſt* in the World, yet his *ſolicitude* was temper'd with that *ſtedfaſt truſt,* that it might be ſeen the acknowledg'd Verities of *Gods governing the World, ſuperintending and ordering all humane affairs* by wiſe and ſteady Counſel, and almighty

almighty Power, which in moſt others are but *faint* Notions, were with him turn'd into *living ſence* and *vital Principles* which govern'd his Soul: whereupon his great Reverence of the Majeſty of God falling into a conjunction with an aſſured truſt, and *ſence* of his Love and Goodneſs, made that rare and happy Temperament with him, which I cannot better expreſs than by a *pleaſant ſerioufneſs*: What friend of his did ever at the firſt congreſs, ſee his face but with a grave Smile? when unexpectedly and by ſurprize he came in among his familiar Friends, it ſeem'd as if he had bleſt the room, as if a new Soul, or ſome *good Genius* were come among them.

I need not tell them that ſurvive who were neareſt to him, how pleaſant a Relative he was. Nor doth any man need to tell me how pleaſant a Friend! No man ever more underſtood than he the ingenuities and delights of Friendſhip, eſpecially the high pleaſure of gratifying and obliging another. The reliſhes whereof were ſo delicious

to

to him, that no Feſtival could be ſo grateful to any man as the opportunity was to him of making another taſt, and feel his Kindneſs. Nor did I ever obſerve any thing ſo like a frequent fault in him, as an aptnes to overvalue his Friend.

He was a man of moſt punctual, ſcrupulous fidelity. His word was ever with him ſo ſtrictly Sacred, that in the ſmalleſt matters his appointments, thô numerous, were, through his great prudence, *ſo ſure* that one might, without the intervenience of extraordinary Providence, as certainly expect them, as the returns of Day and Night. So that they that knew him, thô moſt delighted with his Society, were never wont to urge for his ſtay with them beyond his prefixed time (which he commonly mentioned at his firſt entrance) knowing it would be in vain.

He was of a large and great Soul, Comprehenſive of the Intereſts of God, the World, the Church, his Countrey, his Friends, and (with a peculiar concernednes) of the Souls of men. Ready,

to

to his uttermoſt, to ſerve them all. Made up of compaſſion towards the diſtreſſed. Of delight in the good, and of general benignity towards all men. He had a Soul, a Life, a Name darkned with no cloud but that of his own great humility, which clouded him only to himſelf, but beautifi'd and brightned him in the eyes of all others. An humility that allowed no place with him to any aſpiring deſign, or high thought, that could ever be perceived by word, look or geſture. Except the high thoughts and deſigns which neither ought to be excluded nor repreſt. His greateſt ambition was to do good, and partake it in the higheſt and beſt kind of it. To make the neareſt approaches he could to the *pattern* and *fountain* of all goodnes.

And now looking upon ſo qualify'd a perſon, as engaged by *Office* in a peculiar ſort of ſervice to Chriſt, to gather and draw in Souls to him, and prepare them for a bleſſed Eternity: How great things may we expect? What do we not find?

Mells

Mells in *Sommerſetſhire* was his firſt, and only (publick) Station.

Thither he was brought by ſo peculiar a conduct and direction of Providence, as ſeem'd to carry with it ſome ſignification what great uſe he was afterwards to be of in that place.

The very reverend Dr. *Whitchcot*, being, alſo, at that time *Fellow* of the ſame *Colledge* in *Cambridge*, and preſented to a Living in that Countrey, that was in the diſpoſition of that *Colledge*, obtained of him to accompany him in a Journey to viſit, and make ſome trial of the People he had been deſign'd to take the Charge of. Where that ſo accompliſht Perſon expreſt a Reſolution fit to be exemplary to others of profoundeſt Learning (and which was ſtrictly afterwards followed by this his choſen Companion) Preaching his *firſt* Sermon (as himſelf was pleas'd to tell me) upon thoſe words, *I determined to know nothing among you, but Jeſus Chriſt and him crucify'd.*

After ſome time ſpent together here, the Doctors affairs recalling him, for the

the preſent, to *Cambridge*, he prevailed with *our worthy Friend* to ſtay behind, and ſupply his abſence among that People.

What followes I was inform'd of by another hand, but one ſo nearly related to this our deceaſed Friend, and ſo well acquainted with the more conſiderable occurrences of his Life, as not to leave me in doubt concerning ſo momentous a thing, as how he came to be ſettled *in a Countrey* ſo remote from *his own*, and where he was ſo meer a Stranger. And it fell out thus.

During his abode upon this occaſion in thoſe parts, a noted *Gentleman*, the *Patron* of the *Rectory of Mells*, being at that time *High Sheriff* of the *County*, ſent to Mr. *Fairclough* (of whoſe worth, Fame had not let him long be ignorant) deſiring him to Preach the *Aſſize-Sermon*. Some circumſtances having alſo brought the matter within ſo narrow a compas, that the ſtraits of time made it neceſſary to preſs the requeſt with more importunity than could admit of a denial. That

Performance was ſo highly acceptable, and ſo newly over when the *Patron* was ſurprized with the tidings of the former *Rector of Mells* his Death, that he immediately told our worthy Friend, he could not otherwiſe ſo fitly gratifie him for his Sermon, as by conferring upon him ſuch *a Living*, which, if he pleaſed to accept it, *was his.*

The *Opportunity of ſtated Service*, in a Calling to which he had moſt ſeriouſly devoted himſelf, *more than the emolument* (as did afterwards ſufficiently appear) ſoon determin'd his thoughts, and fix't him in this Station : There he ſhone many years a bright and a lively Light, *a Burning as well as a Shining one* ; it was ſoon obſerv'd what a *Star* was riſen in that *Horizon*, and a confluence was quickly gathered, of ſuch *as rejoyced in the light of it*, which made an obſcure Countrey Village, ſoon become a moſt noted place ; from ſundry Miles about, thither was the great reſort, ſo that I have wondered to ſee ſo throng an Auditory

Auditory as I have ſometimes had the opportunity to obſerve in ſuch a place, that did uſually attend his moſt fruitful Miniſtry. And O how hath that Congregation been wont to melt under his holy Fervours! His Prayers, Sermons, and other Miniſterial Performances had that ſtrange pungency, quickneſs, and authority with them, *at ſome times*; that ſoftneſs, gentleneſs, ſweetneſs, alluringneſs *at others*, that one would think it ſcarce poſſible to *reſiſt the Spirit and Power wherewith he ſpake.* And the effect did in a bleſſed meaſure correſpond; they became a much enlightned, knowing, judicious, convinced, reformed, even ſomewhat generally, and in good part, a ſeriouſly Religious People; his Labours here were almoſt incredible; beſides his uſual exerciſes on the Lords-day, of Praying, Reading the Scriptures, Preaching, Catechiſing, Adminiſtring the Sacraments; (as the occaſions or ſtated ſeaſons occurr'd) he uſually five dayes in the week, betimes in the morning, appeared in publick, Pray'd, and Preach't

an expoſitory Lecture upon ſome portion of the Holy Scriptures, in courſe to ſuch as could then Aſſemble, which ſo many did, that he alwayes had a conſiderable Congregation; nor did he ever produce in publick any thing which did not ſmell of the Lamp. And I know that the moſt eminent for *quality* and *judgment* among his Hearers, valued thoſe his Morning-Exerciſes for elaborateneſs, accuracy, inſtructiveneſs, equally with his Lords-dayes Sermons. Yet alſo he found time not only to viſit the ſick, (which opportunities he caught at with great eagerneſs) but alſo in a continual courſe, all the Families within his charge; and perſonally, and ſeverally to converſe with every one that was capable, labouring to underſtand the preſent ſtate of their Souls, and applying himſelf to them in Inſtructions, Reproofs, Admonitions, Exhortations and Encouragements ſuitably thereto; and he went through all with the greateſt facility and Pleaſure imaginable; his whole Heart was in his work.

work. Every day for many years together he uſed to be up by Three in the Morning or ſooner, and to be with God (which was his dear delight) when others Slept. Few men had ever leſs hindrance from the Body, or more dominion over it, a better habited Mind and Body have rarely dwelt together. No controverſies aroſe among his Neighbours, within his notice, which he made it not his buſineſs to get preſently compos'd, and his help and advice was wont to be ſought by Perſons of eminent rank, and in matters of very great difficulty and importance for that purpoſe ; his own Love of Peace always inclining him, and his great Prudence well enabling him to be exceeding uſeful in any ſuch Caſe.

Nor were his Labours confined within that narrower verge ; his Name and worth were too well known abroad to let him be engroſs'd by *one ſingle Pariſh :* in how many places did he ſcatter Light, and diffuſe the Knowledge of

God, whereſoever, within his reach, the opportunity of a Lecture, occaſional or fixt did invite!

The ſtate of things in thoſe dayes making it neceſſary (and not hindering) that what was to be done for the preſervation of *Common Order*, muſt be by the *ſpontaneous Aſſociating* of the *Paſtors* of many Congregations; how did he inſpirit thoſe *Aſſemblies!* The deference that was given to him even by very reverend Perſons of great value, and much exceeding him in years, with the effectual influence he had upon all their affairs (manifeſtly aiming at nothing but the promoting of Religion, and the common good) were only arguments of the commanding Power of true worth: And the good effects upon the People ſhew'd, how much could be done by a naked, undiſguiſed recommendation of ones ſelf to mens Conſciences in the ſight of God: Nor would his Brethren of greateſt value (and divers there were in thoſe parts of very great) think it any detraction from

from themſelves to acknowledge much more to the wiſe, modeſt, humble activity of his Spirit in their common concernments, than I ſhall be willing to arrogate to him. He was, upon the whole, a very *publick* Bleſſing in that Countrey while he kept his *publick Station* in it: And when the time approached of his quitting it, he eminently ſhew'd his conſtant, great Moderation in reference to the controverted things that occaſioned his doing ſo in all his reaſonings with his Brethren about them. And it further appeared in the earneſt bent of his endeavours to form the minds of his People, *as much as was poſſible*, unto *future Union* under the conduct of whoſo ſhould ſucceed him in the *ſerious care* of their Souls; and to a meek, unrepining Submiſſion to *that preſent Separation* which was, *now*, to be made between him and them; whereof the *extant abridgment* of ſundry his later Sermons to them, are an abundant Teſtimony; (thô ſuch a repreſſion of their Sorrows, it was not poſſible to them

to receive othewiſe, than as dutiful Children are wont to do, the Exhortations of an affectionate dying Father, not to mourn for his Death:) In the *Subſtantial things of Religion* no man was more fervently zealous, about *the Circumſtantials* none more cool and temperate.

But he could in nothing prevaricate with his (once ſettled) Judgment, or depart in his Practice one Ace from it; yet ſuch was the candor and ſoftneſs of his Spirit, that nothing could be more remote from him, than to paſs any harſh Cenſures upon thoſe that received that ſatisfaction in the ſcrupled points, which he could not: But he continued a moſt entire undiminiſht Friendſhip with many of them (and ſeveral of eminent note, by whom alſo it was equally cheriſht on their parts) even to the laſt.

His great contempt of the world, and remoteneſs from making the *ſacred Office* ſubſervient to ſecular Intereſt,

reſt, a deſign of enriching himſelf by it, or more than to ſubſiſt, too ſoon appeared in the mean condition, to which he was brought by that deprivation. For thô the Annual profits of his *Living* were very conſiderable, yet his free (but well regulated) *hoſpitality, and large, diffuſive Charity* (wherein his excellent Conſort, one of the moſt pious, prudent, well-accompliſht Matrons I ever knew, moſt readily concurr'd with him) kept them from being ſuperfluous, or flowing into Coffers. He had laid up no *Treaſure* but *in Heaven.* And was the Son of a no way unlike Father, from whom the expectancy of a patrimonial Eſtate could not be great; and whom (to his no ſmall Joy while he continued) he ſurvived but a little. So that for ſome Years (as I have heard him ſay) he did owe much of his Subſiſtence to the Bounty of ſome worthy *Citizens* of *London,* whoſe *temper* it is, to take more pleaſure *in doing ſuch good,* than in *having it told the World who they were.*

His

His Uſefulneſs was ſuch ſince his deprivation, (*not in ſerving a Party*, a thing too mean, and little to be ever thought of by him without diſdain; but) in preſſing the *great*, and *agreed* things *that belong to ſerious, living Religion*, that it even melts my Soul to think of the overwhelming Sorrows wherewith the tydings of his Death muſt have been received, by *Multitudes in the Weſt*, that were often wont with greateſt delight and Fruit to enjoy his moſt lively, edifying Labours.

His Deceaſe confirms it to us, *once more*, that nothing belonging to this World of ours is too good to die.

But it is a great Argument of Gods kind propenſions towards it, and ſpeaks much of his good will to men, that now and then ſuch heavenly Creatures are permitted to inhabit it, and ſuch *Specimina* and Efforts of the divine Life, to appear and be put forth in it.

It

It ſhews God hath not forſaken the Earth, and that his *Tabernacle is with men*, when *any ſuch* are to be found here.

It ought to be reckon'd very Monitory, and a great Rebuke, when ſuch are (earlier than according to natural courſe) taken away.

It ſhould make us love Heaven ſo much the better, that ſuch as he are gathered thither; not that it needs any thing to better it in it ſelf, but that we can now, better reliſh the thoughts that ariſe out of our own preſent knowledge; and having ſeen *true goodneſs exemplify'd*, may thence, more eaſily, take our advantage to apprehend what that State is, wherein there will be ſo vaſt a collection of excellent Creatures, ſo perfectly good, by moſt liberal eternal *participations* from the *firſt and uncreated good*. How taking is this notion of Heaven! *I eſpecially pronounce this holy man bleſſed* (ſaith a great man in the *ancient Church, ſpeak-

* *Chryſoſt. Panegyr.*

† *Philogenius.*

ſpeaking of an excellent perſon Deceaſed †) *for that he hath paſſed from one order to another* (μεταβάλλο) *and leaving our City, hath aſcended to another City, even that of God himſelf, and leaving this Church of ours, is gone into the Church of the Firſt-born who are written in Heaven, and hath left our ſolemn Conventions for that of Myriads of Angels :* Referring to that of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. and magnifying (that πανήγυεις) *that glorious convention not for the multitude of the powers* above only, but for the *Confluence of the good, with a perfect vacancy of envy, and an abounding perpetual Joy and ſatisfaction of Mind* —— *Love, Peace, Goodneſs,* &c. *and every fruit of the Spirit in moſt plenteous fulneſs.* (To this purpoſe he ſpeaks ;) And what an amiable Heaven is this !

Yea, and it may encline us to have ſomewhat the Kinder Thoughts of *this our* meaner *native Element,* and leſs to regret that our earthly part ſhould diſſolve and incorporate with it ; to think what rich Treaſure, what Shrines

Shrines of a lately inhabiting Deity (now become Sacred Duſt) it hath from time to time received and tranſmuted into it ſelf. How voluminouſly have ſome written of *Roma Subterranea**! of the Tombs of Martyrs, and other excellent perſons (as many of them were) collected in one little ſpot of this Earth? And if there were as particular an account of the more refined part of *Subterraneous London*, much more of all places, where juſt and holy men have dropt, and depos'd their earthly Tabernacles, how would our Earth appear ennobled (and even hallowed) by ſuch continual acceſſions to it, in all times and Ages? What a glorious Hoaſt will ariſe and ſpring up even out of *one London?* Is not the Grave now a leſs gloomy thing? who would grudge to lye obſcurely a while, among them with whom we expect to riſe and aſcend ſo gloriouſly?

* *Jo. Severanus, P. Aringhus*, &c.

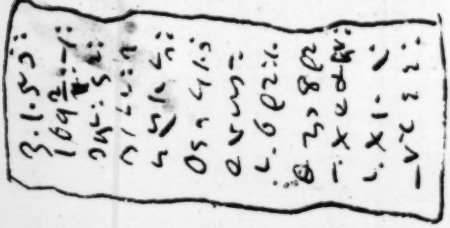
It ſhould make us diligent in the remaining time of our abode here: what ſhould not the expectation of

ſuch

ſuch a Welcome carry us through? *Well done good and faithful Servant*, &c. How ſtudious ſhould we be ſo to acquit our ſelves *as he hath done? Bleſſed is that Servant whom the Lord when he comes ſhall find ſo doing: Let us then be ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing our labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.*

THE END.

N. Clap

ERRATA.

PAge 5. line 16. inſert , , before and after *there*: p. 18. l. 14. r. ἐφίλησε προσαγαγόμενος: p. 22. l. 13. for *doubled*, r. *doubted*: p. 23. l. 14. *comma*, after *that*: p. 25. marg. r. *Luc. Brugenſis*: p. 38. l. 9. for *have* r. *had*. *Sence*, to be every where read, *ſenſe*.